

**Carlisle School Committee**  
Minutes  
December 3, 2008  
Carlisle School Robbins Library  
7:00 PM

Present – School Committee: Chad Koski, Chair; Wendell Sykes, Vice Chair; Dale Ryder; Bill Fink, Louis Salemy.

Present – School Administration: Marie Doyle, Superintendent; Heidi Zimmerman, Business Manager; Joyce Mehaffey, Principal; Patrice Hurley, Principal; Karen Slack, Director of Student Support Services; Claire Wilcox, Assistant to the Superintendent.

**Chad Koski called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.**

### **Public Comment Period**

Mr. Koski welcomed everyone to the meeting, and asked if any members of the public had comments. There were no comments.

### **Review of minutes**

**Mr. Sykes made a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2008. Mr. Fink seconded the motion. All members voted in favor of approving the minutes.**

### **Administrator Reports**

Elementary Principal Patrice Hurley reported on the following:

- Leadership assemblies led this month by the 3rd grades

Middle School Principal Joyce Mehaffey reported on the following:

- Optional reading done by students during the school year
- Report cards and portfolio conferences.

Director of Student Support Services Karen Slack reported on the following:

- Next Thursday's visit to CCHS by 8th grade parents of children with disabilities
- ELL training with other CASE Collaborative schools

### **Members'/Committee Reports**

Mr. Fink reported on recent meetings of the School Building Committee, which has been working on public presentations regarding the project. There is a meeting scheduled with the MSBA on December 9th to discuss enrollment, architect confirmation, space

guidelines, and monetary commitment. Specifications for both the new building and the existing buildings have been revised and the project is expected to cost about \$20 million. A January town meeting is still scheduled, dependent on whether the committee has answers to outstanding questions.

The regional committee has met and is working on budgets, as reported by Mr. Salemy. He stated that the CCHS budget has been drawn up with a 5.2% increase as opposed to the amount of 4% in the guideline budget requested by the Concord Finance Committee. The regional committee will vote on the budget at the next meeting.

## **Information/Discussion Items**

- A. **Curriculum presentation: First Grade.** First grade teachers Shawna Horgan, Sandy Graham, Linda Vanaria, Bethany Boglarski, and Vanessa Gerade attended the meeting to discuss the first grade curriculum. They did a presentation on the Fastt Math program. They discussed the Fastt Math program, first by showing the timeline and giving background on the implementation of the program. They then presented an on-line demonstration of the program, which showed how it is used by first graders.

Following the demonstration the team showed how math fluency has increased following the use of this tool. Last year all students achieved math fluency in 70 problems following the use of Fastt Math. Ms. Graham stated that the students really like working on the computer and learning math facts this way with a game at the end as a reward.

- B. **School Building Committee.** Lee Storrs, chairman of the School Building Committee updated the School Committee on the building project and discussed the material he has been presenting at public forums for the project.

He discussed the proposed configuration for the new building, which will house grades Pre-K through 2 as well as providing new special education spaces in the space freed up by moving classes. Science and technology spaces would be increased as well as space for fine arts, and repairs to existing buildings would be included in the project. He noted that it's important to go ahead as the costs will increase for a new building. A second reason is the continued costs for the upkeep of Spalding. The MSBA has accepted Carlisle for potential funding, so this is another reason to go ahead at this point.

Renovation and repairs planned for the project include roof replacement, air handler replacement, upgrading windows, and others.

The proposed costs break down as follows:

- New building -- \$10 million
- Repairs and renovations -- \$6 million
- Contingency -- \$4 million

Mr. Storrs then discussed a proposed timeline for the project, which would allow for occupancy of the new building in 2012.

Mr. Sykes asked what kinds of questions were raised at the morning's public forum, and Mr. Storrs responded that there were many excellent questions. He discussed the economic environment and its potential effect on the project, which had been raised at the forum.

Ms. Ryder asked if people seemed generally supportive of the project. Mr. Storrs stated that the people at the morning's meeting supported it for the most part. He added that the Finance Committee supports it.

Mr. Fink asked what the process would be for the School Committee to vote to approve the project. Mr. Salemy stated a concern that the amount of \$20 million might not be enough to fund the project.

Ms. Doyle thanked Mr. Storrs and the SBC for all the work done to date.

The Educational Specifications for the project will be discussed at the next meeting and a vote taken to support the new building.

- C. **Long term capital budget discussion.** A summary of longterm capital requests was included in the packet for the meeting. Ms. Doyle stated that she and Ms. Zimmerman had carefully reviewed a list of items and had tried to pare it back to very essential items and that they have prioritized all items.

Members discussed the fact that the longterm capital requirements committee would like the school to include the funds (\$80,000) for computer replacement in the school operating budget. Ms. Doyle and Mr. Sykes will be discussing this with the committee tomorrow to try to resolve this.

Ms. Doyle read the list of proposed items. She stated that the building project would cover a number of the items, and that if the project went forward, we would receive 40% funding for these items.

- D. **Operating budget.** Ms. Doyle and Ms. Zimmerman presented a series of slides as part of the discussion of the budget for next year. The slides had been shown to staff at a meeting earlier in the day and will be presented to the Finance Committee next week.

Ms. Doyle first reviewed the mission and vision statements and the budget changes over the past several years. She showed several slides comparing the expenditures for the Carlisle School in a number of areas to other similar schools. She also showed a comparison of our MCAS scores with those of similar towns.

The slide presentation included a summary of the accomplishments of the school and a review of class size guidelines and class size comparisons for this year and next year. Mr. Fink expressed a concern about the potential size of the first grade classes next year.

Ms. Doyle reviewed the budget drivers and the assumptions used when creating the budget. She then presented a 3-year budget that shows an increase of 3% above the current year budget for next year, with increases of 3.84% and 2.81% for the following two years. Ms. Zimmerman discussed the details of the budget and showed the timeline for budget presentations.

Ms. Doyle followed this with a description of the cuts that would be required to meet the town's requested 0% increase budget. The cuts are arranged in 4 tiers, and Ms. Doyle described the effects of the cuts:

1. Psychologist
2. ELA/Literacy specialist
3. Computers and a world language teacher
4. Supplies and a speech/language teacher

This would save \$268,522 from the budget and would result in a flat budget between fiscal 2009 and 2010. If additional funds were available, the tiers would be restored in order from 1 to 4.

Ms. Doyle then asked for comments from members. Mr. Salemy stated that we should not be asked to fund the school with no increase from one year to the next. Mr. Fink expressed a concern that there is no provision to bring teachers in to reduce class sizes in the budget. Ms. Ryder stated that she is more concerned with increased sizes in the middle school that might necessitate 5 sections, as this has been seen to not work.

Ms. Doyle then reviewed the fees built into the budget for next year, which for the purpose of budgeting are the same as last year and finished by summarizing the overall impact of a level-funded budget on the school as follows:

- Less academic support for students
- Less curriculum support for teachers
- Fewer supplies
- Restricting of Student Services

E. **Review Davida Fox-Melanson grants.** A list of grants was included in the packet and members reviewed the list. Acceptance of grant funds will be voted on at the next meeting.

F. **Policy review:**

1. **Student Rights and Responsibilities -- #08.05.2005.** The Administrative Team had discussed this policy and recommended one small change to reflect actual practice. Ms. Wilcox pointed out the change. This policy will be voted on at the next meeting.
2. **Gift Policy -- #01.02.1996 (second review).** At the previous meeting members had discussed the ways in which donated funds might be used and had requested information from other schools' policies. A sample MASC policy was reviewed along with Carlisle's current policy. The MASC language will be added to the Carlisle policy and it will be voted on at the next meeting.

## **Communications/Correspondence**

The following items were reviewed:

- Letter to Peg Gladstone recognizing her key role in the Carlisle Education Foundation auction.
- Letter to the Kindergarten team thanking them for their presentation to the School Committee
- Letter to Donna Clapp, Jody Kelley, and Wendy Stack thanking them for the electronic whiteboard demonstration to the CSA
- Letter to Margaret Heigl and Cyd McCann thanking them for their Internet safety presentation to the CSA
- Thank you letter to the Kindergarten and Grade 3 staff and Angela Monke for their parts in the Veterans' Day celebration
- Packet from the November 19th Strategic Planning Team meeting

## **Superintendent's Report**

Superintendent Marie Doyle reported on the following:

- Strategic Planning meeting and process
- Education Foundation auction
- Meeting with staff regarding the budget
- Hockey waiver
- Public forums for School Building project
- STEM update
- Thanksgiving activities:
  - Gene Stamell's Thanksgiving play
  - Kindergarten pow wow and Thanksgiving feast
  - Plimoth Plantation pilgrim's visit to first grade
  - Holiday gift drive to benefit 30 children and families from Voices against Violence

## Action Items

- A. **Mr. Sykes made a motion to reaffirm the following policies discussed at the November 5, 2008 meeting: Safety Program, #07.11.1999 and Vandalism, #06.06.1997. Ms. Ryder seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.**
- B. **Mr. Sykes made a motion to gratefully accept the CSA donation of \$15,303.46 in grant funds as reviewed at the November 5, 2008 meeting. Ms. Ryder seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.**

## Other Business

There was no additional business.

## Citizens' Comments

Ms. Sorn stated that she has heard of problems with the 8th grade trip because of the lack of a stipend for organizing the trip and also that the 8th grade team feels pressured by the parents and School Committee.

Mr. Krapf stated that although the SBC has done a great job with the building project, he is concerned with the timing because of the economic situation and feels that the project should be tabled for now. He also stated that in terms of the budget, as the enrollment decreases it will be necessary to look at reducing sections. He also stated that he would like to see the special education expenses per child. He suggested general guidelines for the types of gifts that might be accepted by the School Committee.

Ms. Sorn asked if cutting a Spanish teacher would mean that elementary Spanish would be eliminated. Ms. Doyle responded that the elementary world language program would continue.

## Adjournment

There was no additional business, and **Mr. Fink made a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter executive session to discuss collective bargaining. Mr. Sykes seconded the motion, and all members present voted in favor: Mr. Sykes, yes; Mr. Fink, yes; Ms. Ryder, yes; Mr. Salemy, yes; Mr. Koski, yes.**

The public meeting was adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Claire M. Wilcox  
Assistant to the Superintendent